

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MONROVIA 6299

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, LI
SUBJECT: GOL CABINET CHANGES, FOREIGN MINISTER DENNIS' VIEWS

REF: (A) GENEVA 12564 (NOTAL), (B) MONROVIA 5979

1. FOLLOWING ARE VIEWS OF FOREIGN MINISTER DENNIS ON
GOL CABINET CHANGES GIVEN TO AMBASSADOR CARTER IN
GENEVA.

2. BEGIN TEXT (GENEVA 12564):
"IN MEETING WEDNESDAY EVENING, 16 AUGUST, FOREIGN
MINISTER GAVE ME ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND ON CABINET
CHANGES MADE BY PRESIDENT TOLBERT AT HIS MONDAY, 14
AUGUST CABINET SESSION.

DENNIS SAID TOLBERT CALLED MEETING AT EXECUTIVE
MANSION FOR 8:00 A.M. AND WAS PREPARED TO ALLOW A 'TEN-
MINUTE GRACE PERIOD' FOR ANY MINISTERS WHO MIGHT BE
TARDY. DENNIS SAID EVERYONE ARRIVED ON OR NEAR THE
APPOINTED HOUR WITH THE EXCEPTION OF MINISTER FOR
ACTION AND PROGRESS, MOULTON, WHO ARRIVED AT 0813
HOURS. DENNIS SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT OPENED THE
MEETING BY ANNOUNCING THAT HE ONLY HAD FIVE YEARS
REMAINING IN OFFICE AND THAT HE HAD A LOT TO ACCOMP-
LISH IN THAT PERIOD; THAT HE WANTED PEOPLE AROUND
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HIM WHO COULD MOVE AT THE PACE WHICH WOULD KEEP UP
WITH HIS REQUIREMENTS. THEN, TURNING TO MOULTON,
TOLBERT IS SUPPOSED TO HAVE SAID, 'IT IS CLEAR THAT YOU
CANNOT KEEP UP WITH ME SINCE YOU CANNOT EVEN COME
TO MEETINGS ON TIME; THEREFORE, I SUGGEST YOU FIND
OTHER EMPLOYMENT.'

THEN TURNING TO ABEODU JONES, HE ASKED HER ABOUT SEVERAL MATTERS CONNECTED WITH THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SHE DID NOT RESPOND WITH THE PRECISION EXPECTED SO THAT PRESIDENT SAID 'MADAME MINISTER, YOU ARE WELL INTENDED BUT YOU CANNOT INSPIRE CONFIDENCE AND BRING UNITY IN YOUR MINISTRY.' HE SAID HE THEREFORE ACCEPTED HER RESIGNATION WITH REGRET. THE SAME PROCEDURE WAS APPLIED TO MINISTER AARON HOLMES AND HIS RESIGNATION WAS ACCEPTED. DENNIS SAID THAT POLICE COMMISSIONER, ED HARMON, WAS SACKED BECAUSE OF A STATEMENT WHICH HARMON APPARENTLY MADE TO THE MEMBERS OF THE POLICE IN WHICH HE CALLED FOR AN EYE FOR AN EYE IN DEALING WITH THE PUBLIC. TOLBERT SAID THAT WAS NOT THE PROPER ATTITUDE FOR POLICE LEADERSHIP TO MANIFEST.

EVEN THOUGH SEVERAL OF THESE CHANGES HAD BEEN IN THE RUMOR MILL FOR SOME TIME, THE CABINET ACCORDING TO DENNIS WAS SHOCKED BY THE DIRECTNESS AND SPEED OF THE PRESIDENT'S ACTIONS. HE ANNOUNCED REPLACEMENTS FOR EACH OF THESE OFFICERS ON THE SPOT AND DID NOT OFFER SINECURES FOR THOSE DEPOSED AS HAS BEEN THE PRACTICE IN THE PAST.

DENNIS SAID THAT WHEN THE PRESIDENT TURNED TO HIM, HE ASKED ABOUT THE WORLD CONFERENCE TO COMBAT RACISM
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AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN GENEVA AND THAT DENNIS TOLD TOLBERT THAT HE HAD ASKED MINISTER OF EDUCATION, BLAMO, TO HEAD THE GOL DELEGATION (BLAMO HAS BEEN THE UNESCO REPRESENTATIVE FOR SOME TIME AND SO HAS HAD SOME EXPERIENCE IN INTERNATIONAL FORA). TOLBERT ASKED WHEN BLAMO WAS TO LEAVE AND DENNIS REPLIED 'THIS EVENING, SIR.' THIS PRESIDENT THOUGHT AWHILE AND SAID, 'I THINK IT WOULD BE MORE APPROPRIATE, MR. MINISTER, FOR YOU TO ATTEND.' DENNIS TOLD ME THAT CONSIDERING THE ALACRITY WITH WHICH TOLBERT HAD MOVED WITH THE DISMISSED MINISTERS, THAT HE QUICKLY CHANGED HIS PLANS SO AS TO CATCH THE SABENA FLIGHT THAT NIGHT. THE MESSAGE IS APPARENTLY GETTING THROUGH THAT TOLBERT IS THROUGH HORSING AROUND."
WALKER

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